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# RESTORATION REVIEW

**Leroy Garrett, Editor**

May, 1977 Vol. 19, No. 5

Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

— *Wordsworth*

## Principles of Unity and Fellowship . . .

# THE HIDDEN UNITY OF THE CHURCH

To speak of a divided church is really a contradiction, for by its very nature the church is one and cannot be otherwise and still be the church. The church is the Body of Christ and that Body is one. It has to be, just as our own physical bodies are one and not multiples. Divisions are not only contradictions but also encrustations and impediments. They cannot be any part of the Body, but are only foreign elements, parasites that invade and threaten the Body. But these invaders make it appear that the Body is, after all, multiple, a collection of warring sects and splintered factions. It thus appears that Christ *is* divided, despite the apostle's affirmation to the contrary. But this is the great lie. The church is still one, always has been, and cannot be otherwise. The reason is both simple and beautiful: *it is the Body of Christ.* It is appropriate, therefore, to speak of the church's *hidden* unity. To erase the *hidden* and thus make evident the church's oneness is the greatest task that man can put his heart and head to accomplish.

Our problem with what we call "the divided church" is something like a marriage in trouble. A counsellor could well say to the husband and wife: "Our task is not to make you one. God has already done that. Our task is to recover the blessings of conjugal oneness and thus make manifest the unity of the bond of matrimony." He could point to love, trust, companionship and family security as blessings of marriage and the fruit of oneness. But the fruit has been spoiled by such parasites as lust, malice, jealousy and pride. It isn't that they need to be one, for they are already one. They need to recover the fruit of oneness. This involves digging back into the roots that enlivened their relationship at the outset. This calls for renewal through recovery – a recovery of the love they had at first. It also calls for a sloughing off of all the encrustations and impediments that hang on to their marriage like poisonous parasites cling to a helpless body.

Thomas Campbell realized this hidden unity of the church when he wrote those oft-quoted words in the *Declaration and Address:* "The Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one," and it is this principle that is the genius of the Restoration Movement. Campbell was horrified by the divisions that separated believers into warring camps, but still he saw the church, *the true church of God upon earth,* as necessarily one due to its very nature in Christ. If people are *in Christ* they cannot be other than one, for Christ is not divided. Parties are therefore an abnormality and a contradiction. Despite their presence the church is one. Campbell saw that, and it gives all of us a better perspective if we realize that we have not the resources to make the church one, for God has already done that. If we could make it one, then it would not be the Body of Christ. You may as

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well talk about your physician making your body one. He might make it whole but he can't make it what it already is.

That there can be parties within the church, causing it to be sick, is evident enough, just as your body can be made ill by the presence of pestering parasites. This is to say that our continuing task, since Pentecost, is to renew and reform the church through a recovery of those spiritual values that make the church whole, and so root out sectarianism. We thus are ever busy *restoring* its life and beauty, its institutions and mission in the world. Restoration can mean no more than this, and certainly it is not our task to "restore the church," as if the church did not exist. It has existed since Pentecost and always will, until its Lord comes to claim it. He insisted that all of Hades would not keep it from existing on earth. The Campbells and the Stones did not restore the church. It was their purpose to join the great tradition of reformation, which began with Luther and before, and to restore *to* the church the glory that God intends it to have.

All this is another way of saying that the only unity that ever has been or ever will be is unity in diverstiy. It is odd that this principle should now be opposed by some among us as *liberal,* for it is the very genius of our Movement. Our pioneers not only saw the essential oneness of the church, even in a maze of sectarian divisions, but they realized that that unity could find outward expression only in a diversity of opinions. So their plea became "In essentials unity, in nonessentials (opinions) liberty, in all things love." No one can really believe this slogan (and all our various segments claim to!) and argue for unity only on the ground of conformity. There is to be unanimity or conformity in matters of faith, but these are only truths and principles that are *clearly* and *distinctly* set forth in scripture, such as the seven unities of Eph. 4 or the basic facts of the gospel, and these, and only these, can be made tests of communion in the Body. The vast area of doctrinal interpretation must be kept open and free. Diverse opinions are even to be encouraged, for we learn more by an honest and searching exchange of views, and not by being carbon copies of each other's thinking.

This approach to an *outward* show of our hidden unity is the only thing that will work, for it is realistic about our differences. Some of our "charismatic" brothers and sisters may serve the Lord better if they have their own congregations, in some cases at least. Some congregations will be more "high church" in that they choose to be more formal and liturgical, while others will conduct corporate worship as if they were sitting around a snack bar. Some will have organs and choirs. Some will use only the *King James* – and spend a lot of their time condemning all other versions! Some will be enthusiastic about cooperative enterprises and will want to do their thing through this and that agency. And within all these churches there will be even deeper diversity – each one's *personal* faith in view of his or her own relation to Jesus and the word. What we believe about thousands of things, in the scriptures and out, is going to be different – and why shouldn't it be?

There will no doubt be some error in all these differences, and so the search for truth and understanding

must go on – *within* the fellowship. To say that we must see everything alike before we can share the common life in Jesus is only to say that we must remain divided into various parties, each drawing the line on all the others. Yes, there are and there will always be "brothers in error" – and perhaps a few *sisters* in error as well – but since we are all ignorant and erroneous about some things that is hardly the point. It is the *kind* of error that matters. If one is committed to pleasing God in all he does (1 Jn. 3:22), he might be "in error" in many of his fumbling efforts to interpret the scriptures and still be a faithful disciple. On the other hand he might be ever so skilfull in his handling of the word and simon pure in his interpretations and yet be far from the kingdom. It is largely a matter of the heart. "If you invoke me and pray to me, I will listen to you: when you seek me, you shall find me; if you search with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord" (Jer. 29:13-14).

Unity lies deeper than doctrinal congruency. Just as in nature, our many congregations can be a harmony of contrasts. The contrasts are already there, so it is the harmony, drawn from the Body's hidden unity, that we seek to restore. This comes in part by a recognition of diverse heritages and histories. Surely we have much to learn from the Lutheran tradition, or the Old Catholic, or the Quaker, or from Tertullian and Origen, or from Barth and Schleiermacher. Once we cultivate a more universal view of *the faith*, one that reaches beyond Texas and Tennessee to the work of God in Asia and Africa, we are more likely to appreciate the church's hidden unity – and be more inclined to bring that hidden unity out into the open!

Mention was made of these views being opposed as *liberal*. Let's not allow a beautiful word to get away from us. Nothing is more liberating than to be set free from the sectarian spirit. We are to be pitied when we presume to be the depository of all truth and arrogate to ourselves the claim of being the only children God has. He has children who have never heard of Alexander Campbell and the Restoration Movement, or the "Christian Church" or "Church of Christ." If all of us "Campbellites" were suddenly removed from the scene, the kingdom of God on earth would still be alive and well, and it would be beautifully represented in the lives of countless souls from all four corners of the earth. And these people are our brothers and sisters, not because they are in the Christian Alliance Church of Ghana, or the Nigerian Reformed Church, but because they are in Christ just as we are. And we are all one in Christ Jesus! That is unity, even if it may be more hidden than manifest.

To say that the world would still have the church, and have it abundantly, if we were not around, is not to say that we are not important. I think we are *very* important to the ecumenical (world-wide) Church of Christ, especially since I believe a lot of things are wrong and that the work of reformation is an unfinished task. We have *much* to say in "the great conversation" on the nature and mission of the church. Our own mission has already been charted for us by our pioneers, though I realize we are to continue to examine that course. That course is what we are talking about in this article and on and on in this journal: *to bear witness to the constitutional unity of the church and to continually renew its faith and ordinances through a recovery of apostolic and catholic norms.*

But we can't do that so long as we are divided and sub-divided a dozen different ways. It is that woefully simple. We cannot ask for uniformity of *practice* – all of us doing everything exactly alike; or uniformity of *organization* – all our congregations structured in exactly the same way; or uniformity of corporate worship or of doctrinal interpretation. We can only ask for an expression of the *unity in Christ* that is already a reality, however hidden. This is the love and acceptance (and as far as possible a working relationship) of all our brothers and sisters in the Body, despite the difference. Once we take this step and accept each other, we will then find more and more agreement. But such agreement cannot be made the condition of the acceptance.

Once we take this humble step and manifest the unity that is in Jesus, the Christian world, which badly needs what we *can* offer, will be more inclined to listen. – *the Editor*



**Travel Letter . . .**

## ON A PLANE BACK HOME

**(Delayed)**

Across the aisle from me sat one of our preachers, who could unmistakably be identified by the things he was saying to one of our members sitting beside him. A native Dallasite, he had been working up north for a spell, but was returning to try out for a church in central Texas. The member must also have been from Dallas, for they were much concerned about some of the goings-on among some of the recalcitrant congregations, Park Row in Arlington in particular. At any moment they might have mentioned Park Row's chief transgression, having me as a visitor in the pulpit. I listened for the reference, thinking that would be the ideal time for me to lean over and introduce myself. But it didn't come in just that way, though I did catch references to "Ketcherside churches" up north and instrumental music churches that dare to wear our name, both described as evils that one had just as well resign himself to. It was that "basketball star at Abilene," a reference to Jim Reynolds at Park Row, that came in for top billing. You realize, of course, that *our* own folk, schooled and bred in our finest circles, and heroes at that, like Jim Reynolds and Pat Boone, are not supposed to jump the traces. When they do we can't account for it on ground of conscience but only on the basis that something must be wrong with them.

I was hesitant to reveal that a well-known heretic was so near at hand, so I held my peace. At least I would wait until after dinner, perhaps until we arrived in Dallas, lest I spoil a good thing. After all, when the apostle John fled that bathhouse in Ephesus once he learned that the heretic Cerinthus was at hand, he had one distinct advantage: *the bathhouse was on the ground.* We must not take advantage of our brothers who want to keep both themselves and their doctrine pure by boxing them in at high altitudes. So I turned my atten-

tion to a young couple sitting in front of me who was reading *The Teachings of Joseph Smith.*

I asked the husband if they were Mormons. They were. I explained that there was a question or two I wanted to ask. That took us on into Dallas and into the terminal where it all concluded by my receiving a very gracious invitation to their home in Quincy, Illinois. He had been a Roman Catholic, but now he was really turned on to Mormonism, and he was taking his family to visit their temple in Salt Lake City. Back on the plane the preacher and the other brother forgot all about their wayward congregations in Dallas and proceeded to help me tree the Mormons, quoting scriptures rather wildly. 2 Tim. 3:16 "All scripture inspired of God . . . ," is supposed to prove that there can't be a Book of Mormon, but all a Latter Day Saint has to say is that he believes that book is part of those inspired writings, planned by God for a later period. With their help we were on the verge of a quarrel rather than sympathetic dialogue. The preacher still didn't know who I was or what my religious background might be. But he knew I wasn't a Mormon!

I simply talked to them about Jesus, not bothering to try to disprove any Mormon claims. "Assuming Joseph Smith to be a prophet of God, precisely in what way does he help me to understand Jesus better?" I asked. They replied that he taught them how to live the Christian life better. I quoted various scriptures that point to our duties, such as the gifts of the Spirit in Gal. 5, and asked them to identify any further help that Smith provides that isn't already in the Bible. The wife, a charming and lovely person, insisted that the Book of Mormon tells one of his origin, mission and destiny. I pointed out that if such information is only in the Book of Mormon, millions of believers in Jesus had to wait 18 centuries before they could find out what life is all about.

It turned out that her main point was that Mormonism reveals one's destiny in heaven, celestial marriage and the whole bit. I had fun out of that, telling her about Ouida and admitting that if I could have my wife in heaven that I would be tempted to be a Mormon. But I have one big problem with that, for Jesus teaches that in heaven there will be "neither marriage nor given in marriage." Her answer to that was that you have to arrange the marriage *before* you go to heaven! I still can't understand how we'll be unmarried like the angels even if we marry celestially before we get there. I recall Joseph Smith's answer to that one, which is at least more logical: *that teaching doesn't apply to his followers.*

I asked if it bothered them that Joseph Smith had 50-odd wives, all of them listed by name in Fawn Brodie's book, *Nobody Knows My History.* It did not bother them. I thought of old Sidney Rigdon, one of our preachers who went to the aid of the prophet only to have Smith try to take Rigdon's own teenage daughter to bed with him, but I didn't mention it. The wife said that she believed in polygamy, and I could hardly believe it when she said she was willing for her husband to take additional wives. She certainly is no kin to those Mormon women that Fannie Stenhouse describes in her book, *Tell It All.* Ouida read that book and wept like a child for those women in Utah, some of whom came from England, who watched their husbands take a second wife and then others, oftentimes to the bedroom next to their own.



I told them of my simple, trusting faith in Jesus, that I believed in him and was immersed into him, that I seek to bear his likeness in my life, that I meet with a group of ordinary folk around the Table on Lord's Day. Can I be saved even if I can't accept the Mormon story?, I asked. They said I could be, but my place in heaven would be at a lesser glory. I settled for that. If by His grace I can be but a doorkeeper, ministering to the Mormons, including Joe Smith and his terrestial and celestial wives (which number in the thousands), that will be far beyond what my sins deserve. If I can just be with Jesus, I will gladly let him put it all together just as he wants it.

Once out on the curb waiting for Ouida to fetch me, I was at the side of the preacher once more, and at last I introduced myself. It turned out that he loves me almost as much as I do him, and I don't think he would have jumped out of the plane back over Fayetteville after all. Too bad for him if he had, for then he would have missed Ouida. Once these fellows meet her, they can only figure that there is no possible way for me to be as bad as they have heard.

*– the Editor*

## WHERE IS HOME?

There are some things going on in the Church of Christ that I am ashamed of. There is hardly any other way to put it except to add that they embarrass me. I dislike being reminded that some of our folk are so arrogant and insulting in their sectarianism. It is so contrary to what we should stand for as a people, and it violates our heritage as part of that movement that had as its goal "to unite the Christians in all the sects" and that had as its slogan "We are Christians only but not the only Christians."

In a recent issue of *World Radio News* is an article by Marvin Bryant entitled "Preacher Comes Back Home," and the first sentence is: "David Macy, after spending almost 15 years with the one cup, no Sunday School division in the churches of Christ, has denounced his error and has come back home to the mainline church." How can anyone with straight face be so inexcusably and blatantly sectarian? How dare we be so self-righteous as to claim that we have no error, and that our brothers in the non-Sunday School churches are *brothers in error* and one had best leave them and come back home to "the mainline church." This is so sectarian as to be nauseating, and I would urge brother Bryant and the Mobile, Alabama church that supports him in the mission of "converting denominational preachers" to stop their factious work.

I have pointed out before that those who "convert" Church of Christ preachers, whether it be Disciples, Baptists or Presbyterians, are not so abrasive as to wave their scalps before the world as signs of victory for their side. I have also observed that if we need a mission for converting denominational preachers, why not also get one up for converting Church of Christ preachers, as it is unlikely that the need for conversion is a respecter of pulpits. But Marvin now

has Church of Christ preachers as part of his mission of conversion. He's converting them from one Church of Christ to another Church of Christ – the *mainline* Church of Christ!

Since when is one "in error" for not having the Sunday School or plural cups? And if those brethren are "a division in the churches of Christ," how about all the rest of us? We left the Disciples over the organ. Does that make us a division? The truth is that the non-class congregations are not and never have been a division in the sense that they "left" anybody. Two generations back none of the Churches of Christ had the Sunday School or plural cups. As we got bigger and richer we began to adopt the ways of our neighbors. In came stained-glass windows, carpets in the aisle, an oaken pulpit and the professional minister, expensive plants (rather than meetinghouses), and the Sunday School. History will testify that when the Sunday School began to emerge among us the *Firm Foundation* had articles against it as an innovation!

N. L. Clark is one of the great names in Church of Christ history. I used to "hear" him when I was a babe in arms. He was a favorite of my father, and from what I heard around the supper table all my life I take it that brother Clark could really lay it on. My parents heard him in schoolhouses and under brush arbors back in the days when the Church of Christ was separating from the Christian Church. Well, brother Clark became one of the leading protagonist against such innovations as the Sunday School, and he expressed himself time and again in the *Firm Foundation* as did numerous other of our leaders back in those days.

Gradually the class system of teaching took hold in our larger and richer churches, while many congregations remained "faithful" by holding to the plan of but one assembly (undivided), which is the pattern called for in 1 Cor. 14, they insisted. So, if anything, it was the class-system churches that "left" or divided, not the non-class since they continued doing what we had always done.

According to Marvin Bryant, N. L. Clark was "in error" and would need to be converted – but to what? The only Church of Christ there was in those days was non-Sunday School! They were the "mainline" Church of Christ since there was no other. Now that the Sunday School churches are in the majority, they are mainline, according to Marvin, and all other Churches of Christ are to be converted and become like us, the Sunday School churches. This is not only sectarian, it is silly.

Marvin tells us that David Macy made a public confession at one of our soul-winning workshops in San Antonio. He had been in the "mainline" church in his youth and attended David Lipscomb. Now he makes a confession and comes back home to the mainline church! Notice what we have here. A preacher in one kind of Church of Christ (non-instrumental) makes a public confession of his "sins" for being with another kind of Church of Christ (non-instrumental)!! This is called a "conversion" at a soul-winning workshop!! My God, what has happened to us? Must we go from bottom to rock bottom in our sectarianism?

I strongly and unequivocally protest this paganizing and dechristianizing of our brothers in Christ of the non-class, one-cup persuasion. In these two groups there are some 800 Churches of Christ. In these congregations are some of the dearest, most committed, and most knowledgeable disciples that Jesus has on this earth. I take it that neither David Macy or Marvin Bryant knows what is going on among these churches, especially the non-class. Their leadership is growing more and more open toward other churches. They may not have a single minister under 50 who would now take the hard line of making the class question a test of fellowship. They are reaching out into foreign missions and cooperating with other churches. Some of their churches have held unity meetings. Some of their editors, such as Thomas Langford, Larry Brannum and Gene Shelburne, have taken part in unity efforts far and wide and have deposited in our literary archives some of the very best material on the problems we face in our divided Movement. The same can be said for Ervin Waters and Jim Russell, editors among the one-cup segment.



And now Marvin Bryant brings us David Macy, who confesses his sins for being amongst these people. He's coming home! Well, I for one don't buy it, and I view it as one of the most sickening manifestations of partyism demonstrated among us in this generation. Marvin is the one who ought to "confess" for foisting this sectarian pride upon the churches. Imagine being *paid* to do this sort of thing!

If David Macy has been sectarian in his attitude where he has been laboring for Jesus, then let him turn from that and become more open and responsible, as so many in the non-class and one-cup churches have done and are doing – just as a lot of folk in the "mainline" churches need to do the same thing, as many have. The only confession he needs to make for being sectarian is to the Lord, or perhaps to the people with whom he has labored. Why should he move from one sect to another sect in order to get "right" with the Lord. Let him – let us all – work for love, unity and fellowship where we are. When a "mainline" Church of Christ preacher realizes he's been sectarian and wants to correct that, I don't see that he has to go back "home" to the Disciples.

Ervin Waters, longtime the champion debater of the one-cup, anti-class persuasion, has set the example for us all. I heard him deliver his *magna charter* to his brethren (I was the only "cups-class brother" in the house!), explaining that he would no longer be a party man, even though his conviction about classes and cups remained the same. He has since been a prince of peace rather than a son of war among those brethren. But he didn't leave and won't leave. Why should he? They are the ones that need him most.

Now if Marvin wants David Macy in our wing of the Church of Christ, if he wants him to leave one sect and join another one, then he is going at it the right way. But those of us watching from the sidelines have the right to call it for what it is – *sectarianism.*

And if David Macy would rather have a job with one of our kind of Church of Christ churches (I think I put it right that time!), then I presume it's appropriate for him to make the switch, but not under the subterfuge that what he is leaving is a sect and what he is coming to is the true church. There is only one true church, and I take it that David

was in that Body when he obeyed Jesus back in his David Lipscomb days. When he "converted" to the one-cup position, he was still in that one Body. So he is now in the *mainline* church. He has been our brother in Christ all along, however sectarian. Some in Corinth were sectarians but still in the Body. All our Restoration congregations demonstrate that we can be (though we ought *not* to be) sectarian and still be the Lord's people. I fear he would have but few people if his only children were those free of party-ism. But his prayer and will is that we not be factious, and so we should strive to preserve the Spirit's unity in the bond of peace. This we cannot do by each segment among us arrogating to itself the claim that it and it alone is the true church, and that lines can be crossed only by repentance and confession.

But this is nothing new to Marvin Bryant and the Mobile church. They have been "converting" Christian Church preachers for years, and always they are held up to the world as converts for our side, and always they are after a job with a church. I have visited with some of these "converts" personally, and I have reason to believe that they are bankrupt financially and otherwise, and they make easy prey when our folk move in and hold up a lucrative job as an incentive. This is surely among the most carnal and unchristian programs going on among us. The only right thing to do is to stop it.

The only "home" the believer has is in Jesus. In that home we are all God's family, brothers and sisters together. If I persuade a Baptist or Methodist to accept the principles we stand for, it doesn't follow that he is "converted" and has to come with us. He might best serve the ideals we espouse by staying where he is. He is my brother already if he has been initiated into the Body, and he is at home already, not in the Methodist or Baptist churches, but in Jesus. The church of our time is tragically divided and God's sheep are scattered. No one group can lay claim of being the true church to the exclusion of all others. In the true Restoration ideal, we want to reach out and accept all God's children as our brothers and sisters, encouraging them to labor and pray for the oneness of the Body. We defeat all this when we strive to win each other over to our particular party. Indeed, we sin when we do it.

*– the Editor*

## TAXATION WITHOUT SALVATION

**Norman L. Parks**

Church of Christ preachers, it has been demonstrated, are better paid than the clergy of most Protestant churches, and their salaries bear no identifiable relationship either to educational preparation or experience, in contrast to salaries in other religious bodies. But this is not all of the story. The preacher in the pulpit also enjoys tax benefits not extended to the church secretary who gets out the weekly bulletin or the pew-sitters who pay his salary.

These facts demonstrate that the doctrines of the church may sometimes be rewritten in the halls of Congress and by the bureaucrats in their rule-making roles, claims of church autonomy to the contrary notwithstanding.



If the Restoration movement in America had a universally proclaimed plea other than "back to the Bible," it was "the universal priesthood of believers." Wherever its spokesmen went across the country, the affirmation was made that all Christians are priests of God. To this was usually added the charge that religious ignorance and disunity were rooted in the man-made institution called "clergy." Alexander Campbell thundered that "God made man, the clergy made layman." Again and again he insisted that "they have shut up everybody's mouth but their own, and theirs they will not open unless they are paid for it."

My first introduction to the view that the church had no clergy was in my childhood from the late "Elder" John R. Williams, a rugged Tennessee peripatetic who would preach to no church unless he had been instrumental in starting it. Williams scornfully refused to accept the railroad discount to clergymen and paid his full fare.

Since his day the universal priesthood doctrine has been quietly laid to rest in the Church of Christ, and a "layman" (even an elder) is less likely to appear in its pulpit than, for example, in the Methodist Church, in which special provision is commonly made for "layman Sundays." If the local Church of Christ "minister" must be absent from the pulpit for a Sunday, it is predictable that another professional will be hurried in to fill it.

With the rise of this special clergy, which the church insists on denominating "minister" rather than "pastor," it would be logical for these new "located" clergy to exploit the tax benefits written into the Internal Revenue Code for the benefit of religious divines. Such has been the case. If the ordinary church member is not aware of the tax goodies which their preacher enjoys to boost his income, he is likely to be informed on Part III, Sections 107 and 119 of the IRS Code. Section 107 has been the chief reason for the increase of church owned residences to house preachers, until today every church which can beg or borrow the money owns a "preacher's house." It must never, of course, be called a "parsonage," because that would be "just like the sects."

What does Section 107 provide? It states that the "rental value of parsonages" are excludable from the gross income of the clergyman which he must report on his income tax. Since the rental value of almost any parsonage would be at least $2,400 a year, the preacher gets the cost of his residence tax free. Sad to reflect, though the little secretary who gets out the bulletin and keeps things moving does not get one cent of tax relief for her home though she, too, is engaged in full-time religious work. If the preacher chooses to live in his own home, he gets a tax-free housing allowance to help him pay for it. But the church janitor has no such break.

Now the logical extension of Section 107 suggests that every person engaged in compensated religious work should be entitled to tax-exempt housing, provided church officials would designate that he or she is a "minister" and the employing agency would accept the finding. It is interesting to note that male professors of one of our Christian colleges, which after all are religious institutions and

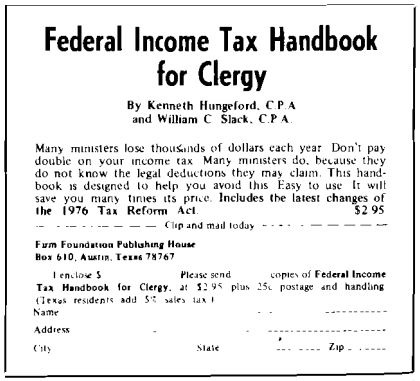
hold that religion permeates all classes and all activities from football to mission study, have received certification as "ministers of the gospel" and a tax exemption of $3,000 for housing. Regrettably from their point of view and in keeping with the traditional church discrimination against women, the female professors cannot receive certification and must pay the full tax bill.

Even this is not the last word about the reduction of the preacher's taxable income via "housing." If the local church sees fit to include the heating bill, the light bill, and the telephone bill separately from his salary, the preacher does not have to include these items as a part of his income. Indeed, he may enjoy new curtains at the window and new rugs on the floor in the same way.

Among the twenty-one other excludable classes found in Section 119 for the benefit of the clergyman, a favorite is the automobile allowance. If the church gives the "minister" an auto allowance of $75 or $125 a month, the allowance does not become a part of his income on which he must pay taxes. The result is that though the church secretary cannot get any travel deduction for driving from her home to the office, the clergyman can drive tax-free to work. This in no way reduces the other deductions which he may take on his automobile. Gifts and honoraria for weddings, funerals, and other services and out-of-pocket gifts of appreciation to the preacher are also not includable in gross income. In sharp contrast is the waitress who must include every tip on her income tax.

Church of Christ preachers are quick to point out that they do not get retirement benefits apart from Social Security and few churches pay health insurance. But these are in the offing just as soon as we can officially alter our doctrine to recognize that while all church members are priests, a few are more priestly than all of the others.

Mammon, it seems, can cause religious professionals to surrender their most cherished pretensions. One illusion promoted by the Church of Christ clergy is that we, being different from the sects, have no clergy! Now that illusion dissolves in a smoky poof as the income tax deadline nears. Witness the advertisement by our most orthodox publishing house in Texas announcing the sale of a new book under the title *Federal Income Tax Handbook for Clergy*. There, in bold print in a super-orthodox Church of Christ journal, was the taboo word "clergy!"



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"Many ministers lose thousands of dollars each year," this oracle of the faith advises. "Don't pay double on your income tax." With this book, right up to date through 1976, every Church of Christ clergyman can save a pocketful! Also he can "educate" his eldership so as to grab future tax goodies. After all, if you are going to admit to being a clergyman, make it pay, man, make it pay!



**Pilgrimage of Joy . . .**

## ST. LOUIS, HERE WE COME!

**W. Carl Ketcherside**

The stage was set for a gathering of preachers and other interested persons to discuss what steps should be taken to unite our forces against the "Rough Draft." Kansas City was a central location. An invitation was extended by the elders at 26th and Spruce Streets to use their facilities. W. E. Ballenger, a widely recognized preacher and a member of the congregation presided over most of the meetings. Man after man mounted the platform to speak against "the departure from the faith" of the *Review* publishers.

It was generally agreed the *Review* was gone. The time had come to look elsewhere for "brotherhood leadership." Since the *Macedonian Call* was already being published and D. Austen Sommer had stood firm against his brothers we decided to back his journalistic effort. Those who continued to write for or report through the columns of the *Review* would be regarded as having departed from the faith. A document entitled "The Rough Draft – Its Sponsors – Also Its Outworkings – Why We are Against It" was drawn up by D. Austen Sommer. A great many men signed it. Like John Hancock, I wrote my name big and bold. I also collaborated with Brother Sommer in drawing up another paper analyzing "the Rough Draft" and urging all who loved the Lord to lift up their voices against it.

Our action served to create another schism in an already divided movement. It also doomed the exclusivistic Sommer faction to death. Our actions were injudicious and our reactions unwarranted. I was wrong in what I did. A lot of things I wrote and said in the time of tension were absurd. I do not try to excuse them on the basis of youthful immaturity. I was sectarian in attitude and filled with pharisaic pride. I helped to create another arrogant and hostile party even though I acted in all good conscience. That I became a recognized leader in it was a tribute to my dogmatism and aggressiveness. I am ashamed of both of them. They only added to the sin.

If we had regarded the so-called "Rough Draft" as merely another newspaper article and allowed people to read it for themselves without trying to inject political prejudice into their minds it would not have caused a ripple. But when we took up our cudgels and attempted to beat brethren into submission we made a grievous error. It was a sin to call a central meeting in Kansas City for the purpose which prompted it. And it was a sin to create another party among those in the undivided Christ. That it fell my lot to become a "chief of sinners" in promoting the resultant mess is no comfort.

Legalistic sects secure no peace by division. So long as the spirit which prompted and encouraged the division remains, they only lay the groundwork for additional strife. Before it was all over Brother D. Austen Sommer, motivated by fear of the growing popularity of *Mission Messenger* which I published, became increasingly hostile to my work and refused to even meet with me to effect a reconciliation. When I laid my whole sectarian spirit down before the Conqueror of my person and heart, some of the brethren

with whom I had long been associated as a champion, took up arms against me, regarding me as a Benedict Arnold or a Judas Iscariot. They were acting as sincerely as I had acted when I engaged in the same tactics and they were employing toward me the methods I had taught them by precept and example. One should not complain too much if he is fed from a spoon he polished himself. But there is something wrong about a system which breeds jealousy and envy instead of love, and which forces us to reject those who grow closer to Jesus, while accepting those who stagnate or wither on the vine!

Our new association flourished. Some of the most outstanding preachers of the gospel in the 1930's were a part of it. They were men who knew the Book and were powerful proclaimers of its message. There was no dearth of congregations and they were scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In Missouri alone there were 120 congregations with which we could labor. Our cause was relatively strong in Indiana, Illinois and Ohio. We were now "the faithful church" as distinguished from the "Rough Drafters." We were separated from each other by a newspaper article and the interpretation we placed upon its value. It is of such fragile cobwebs that sects are born with the strands being reinforced by human pride, fear and stubbornness.

It was during this period I was called upon to make a decision which would affect the remainder of my life. I went to St. Louis to conduct meetings for the brethren who met at 7121 Manchester Avenue. There were two meetings, each of two weeks duration. The first was in the autumn of 1934, and there was such an ingathering of souls that, after the meeting ended the brethren had to remodel the building and install a balcony to take care of the increased attendance. While I was there the leaders approached me about moving to the city which was known as "The Gateway to the West." They wanted me to labor with them by personal visitation to build up the cause. I promised to think about it but the bigness and noise of the city with its frightening dehumanizing influence had little appeal to me.

During the next two years the labors in Nevada and the harvest field were very satisfying and rewarding. Our children were growing and the relationship with the saints was pleasant and encouraging. In spite of this the suggestion planted by the brethren in St. Louis was beginning to appeal to my sense of purpose.

The congregation in St. Louis began with five women who had moved to the city from rural areas. The leading light was Bertha Robinson who came from north Missouri. With the help of her sister Mabel she began the work. Nell and I are agreed that, of all the people we have ever met, Bertha Robinson was the most saintly. Neither she nor her sister ever married, but both were truly wedded to the Lord and to Him gave their unstinted devotion. They did home baking for a select clientele and were famous for their cakes and cookies which graced many parties given by the socially elite.

When they moved to the city they never missed a Lord's Day of remembrance of Jesus. They set the Lord's Table in their home and were led to find three other sisters who had gone to the city and who met with them. Realizing that many would not meet in a home they decided to rent



an upstairs hall on Vandeventer Avenue. They placed a modest advertisement in the classified section of the Saint Louis papers, alternating in the three news journals. Every Sunday Bertha prepared the items for the Lord's Supper and carried them on the streetcar to the meeting site. Here the five women sang hymns, prayed, studied the Word, and encouraged one another in the Lord. For weeks they petitioned God to send them a brother who could help by conducting the meetings.

The first man to attend was Edward Burtchinger, a Swiss gardener and yard man who had been brought to the United States to care for the grounds of a large estate. He was more of a problem than a help. He could not do anything in the public meetings and did not believe the women should. Bertha Robinson questioned him about every item in turn, but he could not sing, would not teach, and contributed only his presence and objections. The women, confronted with the dilemma of offending God or man, quickly reached a decision. They continued to carry on the meetings as before. Brother Burtchinger still attended.

The first real break came when Robert Morrow moved to the city from near Dixon, Missouri, having been reared in the faith in a rural congregation where all participated, he was capable of edifying and exhorting. With his advent others soon followed. The little group multipled in number until they decided to purchase a place of their own. They soon learned of the meetinghouse at 7121 Manchester, located one block from the city limits, and with excellent trolley service from all sections of the city. This was an important consideration in a day when few families owned automobiles.

I first spoke for the brethren there when I was still a "boy preacher" and was passing through the city enroute to a meeting in the Lead Belt area. When I came back in 1934, which was eleven years later, I was 26 years old. The congregation was growing in numbers and in knowledge of the truth. There was an array of talent and I have seldom seen such a wealth of teaching and speaking ability. Robert Morrow lived next door to the meetinghouse and acted as a wise counsellor. He was aided by a number of brethren who had gravitated to the city from Missouri and Illinois – Wilson, Thompson, Bilyeu, Janes, Smith, Baldwin, and many others, capable proclaimers of the Word. The greatest asset, however, was the number of young married couples, and the alert and spiritually aggressive young people, many of them still in high school.

The brethren wanted me to come for two reasons. First, they held the concept that congregations should be small and active, keeping every member occupied and busy in spiritual things. They wanted me to train every man to function in whatever capacity he could, and when the congregation attained to approximately 150 in regular attendance, take 30 or 40 and plant them as a nucleus in a new locality. They spoke of moving into the world by colonization, with the idea that the original congregation would supply the new group whatever was necessary until they could stand on their own feet.

As we discussed it, they used the illustration of a strawberry plant which puts out runners on all sides and starts new plants, until eventually a garden plot is covered and the fruit is abundant. The idea was not to erect huge

material buildings, but to keep them small, and when the congregation outgrew the facilities, to plant a new one rather than to "tear down the barns and build greater." Repeatedly it was said that when bees fill a hive they swarm and the number of hives increase as a result. It was believed that so long as the brethren could maintain a family feeling, visiting one another in their homes and in hospitals, all sharing together at picnics and basket dinners, there would be less loss by attrition and desertion.

All of the men, some of whom were skilled in business and held trusted executive positions, felt that the same principles which were being used to weld together into a team the workers in industry, could be applied in modified form to build a congregation into a fighting unit in the army of the Lord. As they outlined it, my work as an evangelist, would be to go with each new group that was planted, remaining to teach and train them until they could function on their own. When bishops had been developed, selected by the saints, and ordained to function, my work in that congregation would end. I would then be free to go elsewhere and duplicate the process.

There was a general consensus of opinion that nothing would weaken a congregation quite so much as hiring a man to do the work which God ordained for all the members, and while rapid numerical growth would be experienced by such a method, it would amount to increasing the number of weak and dependent members whose trust was more in man than in God. My task would be with new congregations where I would work myself out by working others in.

Secondly, the brethren felt that my knowledge and insights, which they greatly over-estimated, should be made available on a wider scale so that young men could be imbued with a desire to take the Good News to a world of suffering mankind and could be trained for more effective service in their communities. It was proposed that I teach an annual Bible Study to which men and women might come without charge for enrollment or tuition. In connection with such a study I would teach public speaking, vocabulary expansion and word studies, employing the Bible as the only textbook.

The prospect was appealing since many congregations had young people of promise who were anxious to learn the word of God more perfectly. It appeared to be an opportunity to strengthen the future potential leadership of the churches. I had already decided I would like to have our children reared in a large city environment where they could have cultural benefits not available in a more restricted area. St. Louis was a historic spot which attracted men and women seeking jobs, from every section of the Missouri Ozarks, as well as from states like Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee.

What I did not realize at the time was that we were considering becoming a part of the restless current flowing from rural areas to urban centers and that we would be on the cutting-edge of a tremendous national transformation which would eventually upset and destroy many of the traditions we had cherished. It seemed wise to move because I could better promote the cause to which I was dedicated. As I talked with the brethren the question of support arose. I expressed my opposition to making a contract or having agreement on a fixed salary. I told them I was willing to come and they could provide for my needs as they saw fit. One of them said, "You make the move and we promise you we will not allow Nell and the children to starve. It was the only financial agreement we ever had.



In years to come as they attempted to give me increasing amounts I repeatedly refused them accepting only what was essential to meet our immediate needs. When they insisted on exceeding this, Nell and I simply returned it to the congregation with our thanks. I felt that if I took more than our need required, God would cease to bless us. I did not want to become a "peddler of the gospel." I wanted to share what I had to offer and I was content for the brethren to "share with him that teacheth in all good things."

I suspect now that my decision to move was a traumatic experience for Nell but if it was she kept it in her own heart. We liked Nevada. We liked our simple house. We loved the people very deeply. It was heartbreaking to leave them. Many of the older ones wept, thinking they would see our faces no more. They were especially reluctant to give up Jerry and Sue and imagined all sorts of dire things which would happen to them in the city. The whole congregation felt a kind of proprietary interest in the children.

Our plans to move were complicated somewhat by the fact that I was to become involved in my first major debate. I had previously engaged in skirmishes of a local nature and had probably become too fond of this kind of thing. I had gone looking for "trouble" at tent meetings of various kinds and had gloried in the fact that sometimes the Pentecostals had threatened to call the police and have me arrested.

Now I was to meet Rue Porter, a brother of renown, especially in southern Missouri and Arkansas. He was a skilful tactician on the forensic platform. Men who knew him well and who were on his side, predicted he would skin me alive and hang my pelt on the barn door. I regarded all such prophecies as a part of the "psyching process" practiced on opponents. But since this was the beginning of numerous battles I will give a fuller account in my next chapter.

## Monthly Musing . . .

### TEETERING PHARISEES
### Robert Meyers

Readers of this journal will have seen these words of Alexander Campbell before, but they do not suffer by a second reading. Some may have come late to Leroy and Carl's feast of thought and never seen them at all. If so, it is important they be printed because they catch something of the old Restoration spirit which is often sadly lacking in these days.

In response to a reader who identified himself only as "Independent Baptist," Campbell wrote frankly about the dangers of Pharisaism among the disciples of Christ:

"I was once so straight that, like the Indian's tree, I leaned the other way. I was once so strict a Separatist that I would neither pray nor sing praises with anyone who was not as perfect as I supposed myself to be. In this most unpopular course I persisted until I discovered the mistake and saw that on the principle embraced in my

conduct there never could be a congregation or a church upon earth. This plan of making our own nest and fluttering over our own brood; of building our own tent and of confining all goodness and grace to our noble selves and the elect few who are like us, is the quintessence of sublimated pharisaism."

Campbell's second sentence reminds me of a man who told me once that he could not lead a prayer in a building where his fellow Christians had, as he put it, gotten "off the track." Since he would have led the prayer himself, and thus could have worded it as he wished, it might appear to some that he was in no real danger of corruption. He might even have helped get his brothers back "on the track."

But such is the nature of pharisaism. It gathers its cloak about it, serene in the belief that no spot soils that garment, and walks mincingly through the world in scorn of all who are not so perfect as it supposes itself to be. We shall all make plenty of mistakes in our best efforts to live the Christian life. It is worth trying very hard to keep from making the terribly damaging mistake of becoming latter-day Pharisees.

## THE WEALTH OF MINOR GOOD

Some weeks ago, in reviving and refashioning an old sermon on "Little Things," I missed one of Charles H. Spurgeon's most successful illustrations. I would not want that to happen to you when you are meditating on the same topic, so here is the famous old Baptist preacher's lesson:

"Select a large box, and place in it as many cannon balls as it will hold, and it is, after a fashion, full; but it will hold more if smaller matters be found. Bring a quantity of marbles; very many of these may be packed in the spaces between the larger globes; the box is now full, but still only in a sense; it will contain more yet.

"There are interstices in abundance, into which you may shake a considerable quantity of small shot, and now the chest is filled beyond all question; but yet there is room. You cannot put in another shot or marble, much less another ball; but you will find that several pounds of sand will slide down between the larger materials, and, even then between the granules of sand, if you empty yonder jug, there will be space for all the water, and for the same quantity several times repeated.

"Where there is no space for the great, there may be room for the little; where the little cannot enter, the less can make its way; and where the less is shut out, the least of all may find ample room.

"So, where time is, as we say, fully occupied, there must be stray moments, occasional intervals, and snaches, which might hold a vast amount of little usefulness in the course of months and years. What a wealth of minor good, as we think it to be, might be shaken down into the interstices of ten years' work, which might prove to be as precious in result by the grace of God, as the greater works of the same period."

## NOTICES

You have no doubt wanted all these years to make a trip to the Holy Land. Let me urge that you give careful consideration to the trip planned by J. Harold Thomas, minister to the Westchester Church of Christ in Los Angeles. He is such a tremendous person that it would be worth your while and expense just to be with him and his wife Roxie, who is a jewel. The dates are Oct. 18-27, 1977 and the price is $1,109.00 from New York. You will spend a full week in Palestine seeing everything from the River Jordan and the Caves of Qumran to the Sea of Galilee and Nazareth. You will have a great time in Rome on return trip. Let me urge that you go to the bank and make a loan, if necessary, and take your wife on the trip of a lifetime. Write Harold for a brochure and further information at 5925 W. 79th St., Los Angeles, Ca. 90045.

You may notice that this issue is only 20 pages rather than 24, our new size for this volume. We may have to do this for the rest of this year due to rising costs, but we will have at least 216 pages in this volume.

If you ordered our bound volume for 1975-76 and have not yet received it, please give us a little more time. The bindery has been very slow in turning them out.

The writer we urge you to read above all others is John R. W. Stott. We can supply: *Christ the Controversalist* (4.20), *Basic Christianity* (1.75), *Guard the Gospel* (3.20), *Men Made New* (2.20), *Your Mind Matters* (1.50), *What Christ Thinks of the Church* (1.75), *Baptism and Fulness of the Holy Spirit* (2.50). Also two booklets, one on *Who is my neighbor?* and *The evidence for the resurrection* at 35 cents each. Prices include postage.

We have a new supply of one of our popular items, *Love Therapy* by Paul Morris, which applies scripture to the emotional strains and stresses of life. It shows how the Bible is a medicine chest for spiritual and mental ills. 3.20. F. F. Bruce is always worth reading and we recommend his *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the N. T.* at 3.70. We can also send you *The Fool of God,* the story of Alexander Campbell by Louis Cochran, for 3.75.

## READERS EXCHANGE

I was surprised to hear *Restoration Review* hotly denounced in the Sunday morning sermon shortly after these people received their first copies. At least everyone seems to be reading it, cover to cover, and of course some others have had their curiosity aroused and would like subscriptions. I'll see that everyone gets one!

*– outside Texas*

(Ouida points out that this is probably the best advertising we get, *free from the pulpit!* But I am left to wonder, after carefully preparing each article, what *specific* criticisms would be made against us. I am convinced that our positions are both biblical and in keeping with the spirit of our Movement from its inception. We may be wrong about some things, but not *that* wrong, to call for such radical measures of exposure. Perhaps it is because we do not fit the party groove, and some of our leaders do not want their people to read anything that doesn't. But these are dangerous times for telling our folk what not to read!

*– Ed.)*

Please discontinue our *Restoration Review,* for Homer is almost blind and I have all the reading to do. I want to save my eyes so I can drive the car. We really do enjoy your writings and hate to give them up. – *Nettie Langford, Jay, Ok.*

(The Langfords are the parents of our beloved Prof. Thomas Langford of Texas Tech, who often writes for this journal. For many years they have read us and encouraged us. Being of the non-class Church of Christ, they have reached out and grown rich in freedom as well as old in years. Now they can read no more. It should remind us to be thankful that we can read and to use our optical energy on good stuff. I notice that Nettie isn't saving her remaining sight for TV! I wrote them that one day it will not matter, for we will be in a world where God is the light and there will be no night and all tears will be wiped away. – *Ed.)*

The Congregation of Christians that call themselves Colonial Heights Church of Christ join me in praying for your work. Incidentally, we use musical instruments (organ and piano) in our house of meeting. However, if they ever become a means of contention they will surely be thrown out! – *C.H. Green, 8473 Old Ocean View Rd., Norfolk, Va. 23518*

I praise the Lord for your desire to reach out and unite Christians of all countries, colors and creeds. I trust the Lord is giving you the strength and the armour to take and deflect the flak. – *Steve Morse, 707 E. Morse, Bloomington, In. 47401*

I especially like to re-read your old issues and compare the position I took then with my views now. – *Kenneth Behringer, 410 Arlington St., Mansfield, Tx. 76063*

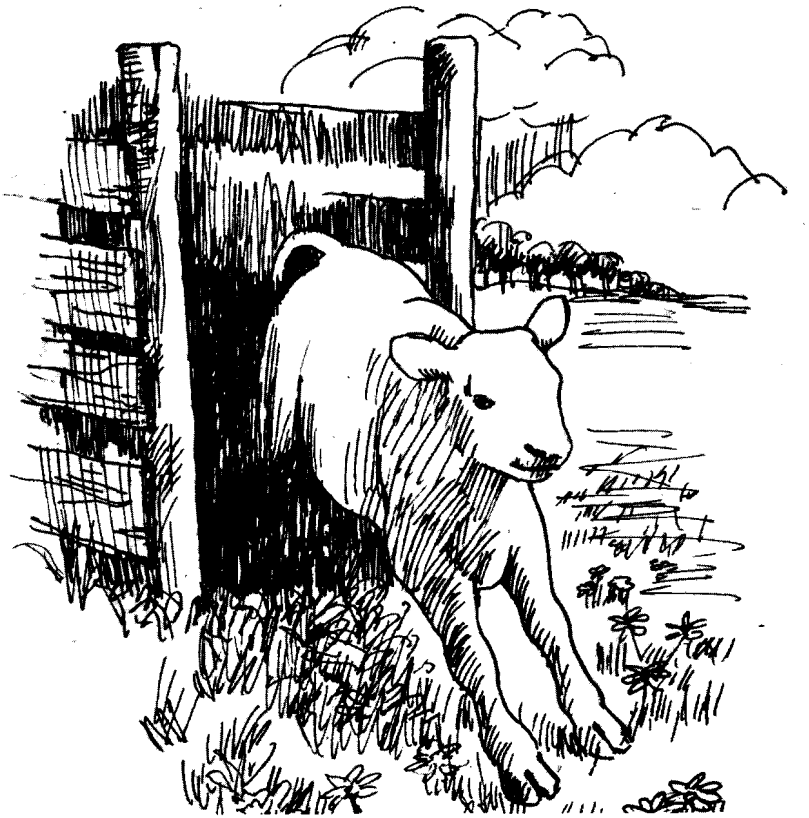
As a chemistry teacher I watch students filter solutions. The purpose of the filter is to catch the impurities and allow the pure to pass through. As the word of God passes from pen to ink through human filters, man's reasoning, let us pray that only the pure comes through. – *John Griggs, Rt. 1, Freedom, In. 47431*

I have enjoyed reading your publication and having a different light shed on many of the controversial subjects. It is good to know that there are a few who will not be afraid to think and write for themselves in spite of the subtle pressures put on them by some of our brethren. In keeping with your suggestion to share the blessing of this paper with others I am sending you five names of loved ones whom I would like to receive this paper. – *Stephen Vick, Pascagoula, Ms. 39567*


# RESTORATION REVIEW

**Leroy Garrett, Editor**

June, 1977 Vol. 19, No. 6

You will be a free and happy as calves let out of a stall.
– *Mal. 4:2, Good News Bible*

See *For Freedom's Sake in Birmingham,* p. 122

(Drawing by Tom Farr, Denton, Texas)